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M. E. Miller, Editor

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THE COUNTY OFFICIAL PAPER

WHO IS A LIAR?

The poor old Mist is an anvil which receives all the hard knocks of this recall campaign. We have been giving out the facts and figures concerning the road situation and they have stirred the people of the County to action until investigations are being made. Great numbers of people from the various parts of the County have been coming to St. Helens the past two weeks to get at the real situation and in every case, where people have come here with the honest and earnest desire to learn the truth of the situation, they have gone home satisfied that the recall petitions are bare faced falsehoods and misleading statements. In addition to arousing the interest of the people who want to know the facts as they really are, our articles have stirred to action our friend the Rainier Review. It takes to task the Mist for making a statement concerning the progress of the road work in the County and proceeds to exhaust its abundant vocabulary of adjectives towards us. It calls us everything except a truthful magazine. It says we are the greatest liar and falsifier that has appeared during all the ages. It proceeds to suggest that because we have given the actual facts that we are walking on the cloven hoof hid beneath an angelic robe of suave hypocrisy. We are a hypocrite, a liar, a disturber, a class agitator and all other nice things. We are proud of all the distinguishing compliments paid us by our esteemed friend. We are holding up our head in dignity to think that so much notoriety has been gained as would cause the great and only Rainier Review to condescend to notice us. In the meantime the Mist continues to give to the readers of Columbia County the facts and figures. We have all along avoided anything that would reflect upon the reputation of any one except to say that the people who circulated the recall petitions were misleading the people when they told them that the charges in those petitions were true, when they KNEW THAT THEY WERE FALSE.

But be that as it may, we are going to give a few more facts and figures and let the people judge as to who is the liar and who is the hypocrite. The Review quotes from a report of Engineer Kelly, in charge of the work under Major Bowlby. He says that up to August 31 there has been spent on the Columbia River Highway the sum of \$132,890.79.

The records at the Court House show that there has been spent up to August 31, the sum of \$138,062.32, which shows that Mr. Kelly and the Review are only mistaken in the small sum of \$5171.53. A mere trifle of course, but it shows the accuracy and dependance that can be placed in the reports and estimates of the engineers. Now we presume that Mr. Kelly's statement is not a lie and does not consist of hypocrisy, it is just a mistake. Yet if the Mist should happen to make such a mistake, it would be a damnable liar and not worthy of belief and all its subscribers would cancel their subscriptions and instead take the Review. Right here it is appropriate that the report of Engineer Kelly be given a little more publicity. Let it be compared with the reports of Major Bowlby and his other set of engineering students.

When Major Bowlby submitted to the County Court his estimates of the amount of work to be done on the road from Tide Creek to Clatsop County he said, and this after having spent thousands of dollars on surveying and re-surveying the land, that there would be 87.7 acres of light clearing. Up to Sept. 1st there had been turned in by the contractors as done, 67.7 acres. The same estimate furnished by the State Highway Engineer said that there would be 32.4 acres of heavy clearing and on September 1 the contractors had cleared of heavy clearing 123.5 acres. Those estimates and the consequent mistakes in them of such magnitude show one of two things; that Major Bowlby and his associates were entirely and absolutely incompetent or else they were purposely misleading the Court. Think of a State Highway Engineer drawing down a princely salary, after spending thousands of dollars on surveys making such a mistake. And still this is the man whom the recall candidates for the County Court insist on turning over the road money of the County.

If he makes mistakes of such magnitude in one particular what may be expected of him in others. But in order to show that it was not a mistake which might occur to any other man take some more figures. He estimated

9900 cubic yards of soft rock on that road. Up to Sept. 1st 22,810 cubic yards had been moved by the contractors. Other glaring mistakes were made and yet the people say that they want the Court to turn over to this man who makes such gigantic mistakes, the money paid by the farmers, the business man and the timberman of the County.

It is asking too much of people of common sense to ask such a thing. It is hard to believe that the people are that foolish and we believe that when the people of Columbia County actually see the kind of a man that the County Court has refused to turn over all the funds to that they will be upheld instead of condemned.

But to return to the attack of the Review. We don't care how much abuse is heaped on to the Mist for the Mist is not running for office.

It is just performing its duty in giving to the people of the County reliable news and reliable facts and figures taken from the records. Now then we are taken to task and fearfully abused because we said that there was about 65 per cent of the work on the Tide Creek road finished. That was an awful lie. It was base hypocrisy. It was treason to the king. But let us see what are the real facts; We took the first seven items of land clearing-grubbing, loose rock, hard rock, etc., omitting the pipe and culverts, and figuring on Major Bowlby's estimate on which the bid was submitted and the contract let, the estimated cost at the price of the bidders was \$123,125. Up to September 1st there had been earned by the contractors the sum of \$97,140.31. The Review proceeds to say that the work is only 43 per cent finished and we would like to submit to a fair people whether or not \$97,140.31 is more or less than 43 per cent of \$123,125.

Then we submit to a candid people the stand that has been taken by the Mist in this fight. We are accused of calling people liars, thieves, robbers and such like, but up until this issue of the paper we defy the Review to say where we have ever called any man a liar, thief or robber. We have told some plain facts about certain people and those statements remain unchallenged, because they were true and no denial of them could be made. We have tried to give only facts and call upon the people who were so active to make explanations. That has been our stand. We are a liar because we have said that the \$260,000 bond money and the \$55,000 tax money which the lower end of the County and the State Highway Engineer so magnanimously agreed should be spent on the roads in the upper end, was wanted on the lower road. We deny that we have lied when that statement was made and again reiterate that that is the true state of the situation and in proof of that we cite the following facts. The candidates on the recall ticket, and the leaders in the recall movement, have shouted it from the housetops and argued on each and every occasion that the recall was brought about as a result of the County Court refusing to spend the \$55,000 under the direction of State Highway Engineer.

Now comes the State Highway Engineer and says that he will do no more work in Columbia County on the River road except from Tide Creek down, this year. Then if he gets that \$55,000 what will he do with it? Will he put it on the road where he agreed it should go from Tide Creek to Multnomah County or will he use it on the road from Tide Creek to Clatsop County or will he use it in buying rights of way along the west side of the railroad track? The answer is as plain as is the fact that the Review has been trying to carry water on both shoulders. Everybody with the least bit of judgment in the world knows what he would do with it. Everybody knows what the recallers want to do with it and we say again that the real object of the recall election is to get men in office who will give over to the State Highway Engineer the other \$55,000 so it can be used on the Tide Creek-Clatsop road and our roads can get along without money. That question was asked of candidate A. L. Clark at the Warren meeting last night and he refused to answer it. He knew it was true and was too honorable a man to deny it. It is a fact and can be successfully denied.

"THE CHIEF SUSTAINED"

It is really gratifying that some people are so easily satisfied. The Clatskanie Chief comes out in a big header this week and says "The Chief Sustained". Then it goes ahead to print the letter from Mr. Magruder which appeared in the Mist last week and follows up with the same letter from Mr. Magruder to Bob Yount which appears in this issue of the Mist. They tell the people that Mr. Magruder explains that former letter, but we submit to the careful reading public that instead of an explanation it is simply an attempt to get out of a bad condition. Mr. Magruder and the Chief are trying to hedge. In the second letter can any one point out where Mr. Magru-

der denies that "at the Clatskanie meeting it was so arranged"? Can any one figure out from the second letter where Mr. Magruder denies that it was the agreement between the State Engineer and the County Court that \$55,000 should be used on the old road to SHUNT around through St. Helens? We submit to a candid judgment of the voters of Columbia County whether or not there has been a denial of the real facts of the agreement at the Clatskanie meeting which appeared in the Mist last week. In our article last week we sent out a challenge to the Chief to re-publish its report of that famous Clatskanie meeting as printed in its issue immediately following the meeting. Did any reader of the Chief discover in its columns this week any such news? We made the statement that it would be of considerable benefit to the voters of the County for the Chief to publish its account and see whether the Court and Mr. Magruder were right as to the terms of the agreement reached or whether the recallers and the Chief in its new frenzy were right.

But no. The Chief did not see fit to give to the voters that information. The natural conclusion then to be reached would be that the Chief did not care to republish its statement made at a time when it was free from influences as it would not be consistent with the stand it is taking at present.

Really we are surprised at the statements made in the Chief's editorial wherein it puts the query as to whether or not it is a fact that practically all the streets of St. Helens were made at the expense of the County. Really Mr. Chief we thought you were too well informed to make such a statement even though it be in the nature of a query. Such a thing is not worth while answering. The opposite of that is so well known that it would be a waste of time to answer it and the only reason for it must have been to mislead the voters.

Then again we want to call the Chief's attention to the fact that outside of \$315,0000 which it claims was to be spent on the Highway under the direction of the State Highway Engineer, that it would be impossible to get

another \$55,000 for the Columbia City-Warren road, because it is not to be had. We could ask the Chief to perform a little of that mathematical stuff it recommended to the Mist.

Again we say to the Chief, look up the facts and records and you will be in better position to advise the people. Do not try to lead the voters into such a trap when really your statements are not within a mile of the real facts. Look up brother. Take a day off and do a little figuring and you will see where you are "at".

We have not the space to devote to the Columbia Herald that it should have. We have not the inclination to do so, but in the face of the fact that this co-called newspaper has been filling its columns for the past month with wilful and malicious lies about the Mist we deem that it is but fitting and proper to say that the Columbia Herald is a liar and assassinator of character. It has not printed a word of truth during the whole campaign on the recall question. It has refused to make any investigation of the road situation or the conduct of the County offices. It has carried on a mud throwing campaign against some of the citizens of the County who are so far above the editor of the Herald in truth and morals that it would be beneath their dignity to even speak to him. He is grasping at a straw, the last straw, in the matter of securing a living off the people for slandering and lying about people in an effort to be sensational and thus appeal to certain readers so that enough money could be realized to keep it alive. We have ignored the rantings and ravings of the dirty little sheet and should not now pay any attention to it, but to inform the people that it has not printed a single truth, has created, or tried to create, a Slush Ring and other things existing only in the old man's mind, and vilified and slandered the Mist until it has become unbearable. There are some other things we could say, but actually the space in the Mist is too valuable to waste on the dirty thing.

Mr. Magruder writes another letter, this time to Bob Yount, in which he tries to explain his former letter. Read them over and then say, if you can, that he has explained anything. It is an attempt to do a little hedging.

Sept. 14th, 1914

Mr. Robert Yount, Pres.,
Columbia Co., Good Roads Assn.
Rainier, Oregon.

Dear Sir:—

Replying to yours of the 12th, inst., referring to the article in the St. Helens Mist, of the 11th, containing a copy of a letter, which I wrote to Major Bowlby, dated July 24th, 1914, will explain that on Saturday, July 19th, I was in Portland, and met Major Bowlby, at the Hotel Benson. He told me that he had been informed that the County Court had planned to rebuild and improve the road from Warren through St. Helens, to McBride Canyon, and use for the purpose, part of the bond money, which was supposed to be turned over to the State Highway Commission, for building the Columbia Highway. We both thought that it must be merely a rumor, but I told the Major that I would make inquiry on my return and inform him. I took the Iralda to Rainier, and there found that many persons had also heard the report, and were waiting impatiently for the Rainier local train, on which Commissioner Fluhrer was expected to arrive, after attending the session of the Court held that day. On his arrival a number of us accosted him upon the matter. Mr. Charles Nutt, among us. Mr. Fluhrer seemed indignant to find so many people ready to doubt the sincerity of the Court in connection with the Columbia Highway matter, and explained that the money which the Court proposed to expend on the road through St. Helens was that portion of the general fund, to which the district was justly entitled, and did not in any way effect the amount pledged for the construction of the Columbia Highway. This amount, as you and everybody who was at the Clatskanie meeting on June 9th, and heard the speeches and discussions between Judge Harris, Engineer Griswold, Mr. Clark, yourself and others, knows that it was to be \$260,000, the total amount received from the sale of bonds, and \$55,000 from the general road and bridge fund, making \$315,000, to be expended on the Columbia Highway. It was as you remember, there stated that contracts had been let to the extent of \$280,000, for work between the Clatsop line and Tide Creek leaving \$35,000 for right of way and further construction from Tide Creek to the Multnomah line. It has been the general impression that there was \$55,000 from the general fund which the upper end of the County could use on roads as it saw fit, without the interference or even suggestion of

the lower end of the County. With these figures fixed in my mind and knowing that Major Bowlby understood them that way, I wrote him according to promise, that I believed the Court was doing nothing contrary to the understanding at the Clatskanie meeting. I added my regrets that the County Court and his office were not more familiar with each others plans. The morning I wrote the letter to Major Bowlby, I met Commissioner Fluhrer, and handed him a copy of the letter, telling him that unless the Court and the State Highway Engineer's office could work in harmony, and thus avoid the circulation of false rumors, and let it be known that they were in accord, and had confidence in each other, recall petitions would certainly be circulated, and this would be a hardship on the taxpayers create discord and ill feeling among the people in different parts of the County, reflecting discredit upon the Court, and this should be avoided if possible.

I consider this war in Columbia County as deplorable for us as the European was for the continent, but it seems inevitable, and so much bitterness has been created there is nothing to do, but to vote it to a finish. I think that had the Court been less arrogant with the people, and had been more pliable, and made a greater effort to work in harmony with the State Highway Engineer (without whom the bonds would never of been voted) this disturbing controversy might have been avoided, and the time, thought, and energy now being expended on the campaign, used for effective and constructive and beneficial work in the County.

I think also the State Highway Engineer's office, could of been a little more pliable and conciliatory. In other words the two Commissions, which were created for the purpose of administering the affairs of their offices for the benefit of the people, should work together harmoniously for the best interests of the people. The Court knows that in order that State aid, for finishing the road may be obtained under the law, the location of the Highway must be approved by the State Highway Commission, and it therefor behooved the Court to accept the inevitable with as good grace as possible in the interest of the County. As the Court did not do this, and as we must have cooperation between the two Commissions if we expect to get the best possible value of the funds appropriated for the road, we have no alternative left us but to discharge this Court and hire another, for this campaign has and will, even though the present Court is sustained by the voters, so impaired its usefulness as an impartial board, that in my opinion its retention in office is unsafe to the best interests of the County. I therefor, not withstanding my

friendship for the individuals who compose the Court, feel compelled to favor retiring them as a whole to private life.

Very truly yours,
R. B. MAGRUDER

Clatskanie, Oregon,
July 21, 1914

Major Henry L. Bowlby,
300 Court House, Portland, Ore.

Dear Sir:

It is quite evident that you were misinformed regarding the County Courts intentions in the road matter Saturday, and were justifiable in your belief that it was based on a groundless report.

It seems that the County Court had asked for bids on the piece of road on which it was agreed that the upper end of the County should have and pay for out of its portion of the regular fund. This does not effect the \$260,000 bond money which was to apply on the Columbia Highway. As this proposed road leaves the Highway and shunts around through St. Helens, there will be a few miles of Highway not opened until more funds are available, but as the proposed shunt will be according to State Highway specifications and only one and one-half miles longer and seems to meet the approval of the upper end of the County and the upper end of the County has this \$55,000 to expend, while the lower end of the County might question the judgment in applying it to this road, yet they have a right to do so and at the mass meeting in Clatskanie it was so arranged. We feel sure that it is the intention of the Court to secure the right of way over entire Columbia Highway as located, to provide funds for opening up this piece through Houlton as soon as the funds are available.

I am sorry this rumor got started, and wish that there was a more perfect understanding, and familiarity of plans between the Columbia County Court and the Columbia Highway.

Yours respectfully,
R. B. MAGRUDER

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